

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 30, 2020

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington D.C., 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Shelby, and Ranking Member Leahy,

We write to thank you for the additional \$6 million for oversight activities by the Health and Human Service (HHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) included in the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act (P.L. 116-139). As you know, the Act instructs the OIG to consult with your Committees prior to obligating these additional funds. We'd respectfully request that as you work with OIG to identify oversight priorities, your Committees emphasize the urgency of an investigation into HHS's mismanagement of the Strategic National Stockpile.

We have already been in touch with the HHS OIG about this issue. On April 13<sup>th</sup> we wrote Deputy Inspector General Grimm to express our concern that shipments of personal protective equipment from the Stockpile to our states were woefully inadequate and asked that the office open an investigation into this issue as well as the management of the Stockpile both during and before the current crisis. On April 16, Deputy Inspector Grimm acknowledged receipt of our letter and promised to "follow up accordingly." We continue to hope that she announces an investigation into concerns raised by that letter soon. We have included a copy of that letter for your reference.

The consequences of HHS's mismanagement of the Stockpile have been disastrous for our states and our constituents. The inadequate shipments of personal protective equipment did little to alleviate severe shortages that have put our health care workers at risk of infection. The lack of federal coordination and leadership has sent our states' governors scrambling to find their own supplies in a chaotic international marketplace. Amidst all these problems, we were especially disappointed that the Administration's message for states has been that "they're on their own" when it comes to finding these necessary supplies.

This Administration has clearly not taken preparedness for pandemics and other public health emergencies seriously. As you know, HHS has repeatedly proposed large budget cuts to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other infectious disease response programs. In May 2018, then-National Security Advisor John Bolton dismissed the Senior Director for Global Health Security and Biothreats, meaning no senior Administration official has been focused on global health security for the past two years, all but ensuring that it would be unclear who would be in charge during a pandemic like the one we're living through now.

Public health and preparedness experts agree that the best way to be prepared for a pandemic or other emergency is to maintain an everyday system that can be quickly scaled up to meet new demands. An OIG investigation is needed to ensure that the mistakes of the past few months are not repeated in future pandemics.

As you consult with the OIG on allocations of funding priorities, we urge you to emphasize the importance of an investigation into the Stockpile's failure consistent with our earlier letter's request. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



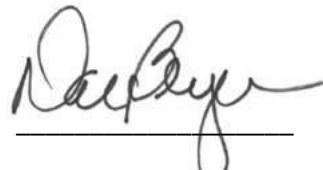
Abigail D. Spanberger  
Member of Congress



Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jason Crow  
Member of Congress